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RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE VIENNA AU PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1521  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 001416

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPAO](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: KYRGYZ MEDIA MOGUL ALEXANDER KIM ON THE CURRENT  
POLITICAL CLIMATE

REF: 05 BISHKEK 739

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Classified By: Ambassador Marie L. Yovanovitch, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: On September 27, Alexander Kim, Kyrgyzstan's leading pro-government media mogul, spoke with the Ambassador on Kyrgyzstan's political leadership, recent scandals, and the state of relations with the United States. Kim described President Bakiyev as a leader easily influenced by pressure, but said there was no current alternative to him. Kim contrasted Bakiyev with Prime Minister Kulov, who he described as controlling the Parliament and being the main power behind the scenes. Kim said the Matryoshkagate operation had purposely been sabotaged by one of the plan's implementers, who was concerned he could otherwise end up in jail. Kim also recommended the U.S. adopt a more aggressive public diplomacy strategy to counter Russia's influence. End Summary.

Bakiyev Isn't Going Anywhere  
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¶2. C) Commenting on the current political situation, Editor-in-Chief of the pro-government newspaper MSN and majority owner of the largest newspaper in Kyrgyzstan, Vecherniy Bishkek, Alexander Kim told the Ambassador on September 27 that he does not believe that there is any figure in the opposition who is powerful or charismatic enough to force President Bakiyev to leave office before the end of his term. As a result, Kim stated that people are focused on preparing for the next presidential election in 2010, but predicted that it will be difficult for the opposition to wait four years.

¶3. (C) Kim described Bakiyev as not being a particularly good president, but one who bows to pressure from all sides. With a smile, Kim said that the situation for Bakiyev is easy - he will do everything that the opposition wants. Describing the relationship between Bakiyev and Prime Minister Kulov, Kim predicted that Kulov would never become president, largely

because he already has accumulated as much power as he wants in his current position. Kim stated without equivocation that currently Kulov controls the Parliament. Kim recounted how he used to receive threats from Ryspek Akmatbayev for his reporting and said that he is now receiving threats from the new criminal godfather Kamchy Kolbayev. Kim claimed that Kulov supports Kolbayev, but was keeping him out of politics.

#### The Tekebayev Operation Was Planned to Fail

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14. (C) Kim also opined on the recent Matryoshkagate scandal involving drugs planted in opposition Member of Parliament Tekebayev's luggage. Kim believed that the operation had been ordered by Bakiyev's brother Janysh, the then-Deputy Director of the National Security Service (SNB). He did not believe that the President knew of this operation. Kim told the Ambassador that the head of Manas Airport security Nadyr Mamyrov, who is commonly believed to have actually planted the drugs, purposely bungled the operation. A career SNB Colonel, Mamyrov supposedly worried that he would be jailed if the operation ever came to light. Kim said that Mamyrov took his concerns to Kulov, and with Kulov's advice, left enough clues behind to show that he was a pawn in a larger game.

#### The U.S. Needs to be More Aggressive

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15. C) The conversation with the Ambassador ended on U.S.-Kyrgyz relations. President Bakiyev is heavily influenced by Russia and is actively trying to hurt relations with the United States, said Kim. When asked how to combat the United States' negative portrayal in the media, Kim recommended that the U.S. be more aggressive in its public

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diplomacy. In his opinion, the key was finding ways to contrast the levels of assistance being provided to the Kyrgyz Republic by its partners. The message should be, Kim said, that "Kyrgyzstan is finished without the United States."

16. (C) Comment: Alexander Kim is always an interesting interlocutor, who is very tied into the politics of Kyrgyzstan. Though he does not paint Bakiyev in a flattering light, it is clear over the arc of the past months he has become increasingly pro-Bakiyev, perhaps because he sees no alternative. This many critics, however, claim not long ago Kim hitched his fortunes to the Bakiyev star and the steady pro-government bias his tow newspapers display is the price he has had to pay. Kim appeared much more frail than the last time we saw him in the spring. During the entire conversation, Kim had a noticeable tremor in both his hands. End Comment.

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